

Revolution Under Way in Reading Habits of County Residents

There is a revolution under way in the reading habits of the residents of Jackson county.

Any way you look at it, people are reading more and more people are reading, according to Roy Gilbertson, president of the board of trustees of the Public Library of Medford and Jackson county. Between July, 1959, and July, 1961, the overall home use of books increased 50 per cent. During the same period the county (outside Medford) use rose 143 per cent, rising from \$1,700 to \$77,000.

The number of library users increased since July, 1959, from 14,000 to 18,400—31 per cent. This means that 28 per cent of the county's population have taken the time to get a borrower's card. Hundreds more use the family card and go uncounted on the statistics, Gilbertson says.

Why are people reading more? There are some good reasons, Gilbertson suggests. Most obvious reason is the fact that the public library has had more support the last two years.

The county court and the city of Medford increased their support considerably. This money has brought the library many more books as well as more help. It made it possible to open the branch libraries a minimum of 20 hours per week.

State grants of \$3,000 in 1959 and of \$27,000 in 1960 also were instrumental in helping fill the shelves of the branch libraries with bright and important books for all ages.

Warm Atmosphere

Gilbertson also pointed out that a hard working and friendly staff created an atmosphere of warmth in the library. The active support of the mass media of the county, the Mail Tribune and the television and radio stations, have made the public aware of the service available to them.

The old adage, "Give people books and they will use them," has been doubly proved in Jackson county, Gilbertson added.

Modern conveniences have made the public library an easy service to use, he pointed out.

A drive-up book return makes the return of a book as simple as mailing a letter. Library users have one card good throughout the whole county, and may borrow and return books at the points of greatest convenience.

Regular Deliveries

Books borrowed at Medford may be returned at any branch library of Ashland. Each branch library receives regular and frequent deliveries from the headquarters library by the courier service

of the Curriculum Materials Center through a cooperative arrangement.

Combined with telephones in each branch, the courier service makes the most distant patron close to the full resources of the entire library.

"I want to point out," Gilbertson said, "that the remarkable growth of the library has created many problems. In the first place the library is a library still wanting in terms of the number of books it provides its patrons and in the expenditures to support it. By comparison with the neighboring counties of Klamath, Josephine and Douglas, as well as Multnomah, all have more books per capita and use their libraries more."

Rapid Growth Problem
A similar problem facing the public library is rapid growth during the current year, a 17 per cent increase. Again, here the branch libraries show a preponderant increase, of 40 per cent. There were 2,000 more users at the

Jackson county has less than one book per capita, despite an increase of 49 per cent in the book supply in the past 2½ years. Klamath and Josephine county have almost two books per capita. In addition these counties spend from 5 to 30 cents more per capita to buy books than does our local library. A library's quality and strength lies in its book stock and the personnel."

Those who use the headquarters library usually must stand in line for service, and even for chairs at times. The new lights provided by the city of Medford helped create an ideal study climate. The lights, combined with long open hours, good reference books and a helpful staff, have attracted students in such numbers as to overwhelm staff and facilities alike, Gilbertson pointed out.

Some relief must be found for these problems, Gilbertson said, or library service will suffer seriously. The budget proposed for 1962-63 provides for some alleviation in the form of two new clerks, and two part-time student assistants. A half-time custodian for supervising library facilities during the evening also is proposed. In addition, the budget provides for modest increases for books and magazines.

The library trustees are delighted at the great upsurge in adult and juvenile education provided through the public library, Gilbertson emphasized. It is the foundation stone of a self-ruling citizenry; the true "University of the People."

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Council Approves Annexation Subject To Favorable Vote

The Medford city council Thursday voted to approve the annexation of territory lying to the west and southwest of present city limits, subject to a favorable vote by the residents of the area at the May 18 election.

The vote came after one Medford resident addressed the council in support of the resolution. The matter had been continued from the previous meeting to allow city attorney William Mansfield to check some legal ramifications of the proposed annexation.

In other action, the council held public hearings on and approved passage of paving projects on Velia and Johnson sts.

However, bids were not called for Jim Poole, 1402 Morrow rd., told the council residents along Velia and Johnson sts. had misunderstood the cost of the paving, and wished now to withdraw their signatures from the petition requesting the improvement.

To Consider Reopening

The council voted to consider re-opening the matter at its next regular meeting. Public hearings were set for the next regular meeting on a proposal to amend the city ordinance in order to permit the construction and operation of small animal hospitals in limited commercial zones.

Another hearing will be held on a request for a change of zone on a piece of property located on Crater Lake ave. in order to permit the construction of the new Sacred Heart hospital.

Plans and specifications

were authorized and approved for the paving of a portion of Olwell Way. Plans were approved for paving a portion of Siskiyou Blvd. and the streets in Brookhurst subdivision unit No. 3. Plans for a sanitary sewer in the Brookhurst subdivision were also approved.

Public Hearing Set

A public hearing was set for May 3 on a proposal to pave Washington st. from Hamilton st. to Plum st.

The council granted a variance to the city's sign provision in the zoning ordinance to permit the erection of a construction sign at the site of the proposed Baptist church building on Crater Lake ave.

An endorsement was voted by the council for a petition by Lakeview, Ore., requesting approval of a revised air route service schedule for Western Airlines. The proposed route would extend from Portland-Salem-Bend-Redmond-Klamath Falls to Reno, Nev.

An appeal by L. G. Miles of Siskiyou Memorial park from a negative recommendation of the Medford planning commission on his request to erect a sign advertising his business at Siskiyou Blvd. and Highland dr. was continued by the council. A joint meeting will be held with the planning commission to discuss the matter.

Contract Awarded
A contract for purchase of a one-half ton pickup truck was awarded to the low bidder, Courtesy Chevrolet, at a net price of \$1934.66.

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